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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/18/2016

TAGS: PREL ASEC PTER GA LE

SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA: STATEMENT ON SITUATION IN LEBANON

REF: BANJUL 448 (NOTAL)

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.4 (D AND G)

STATEMENT BY LEBANESE COMMUNITY

¶1. (U) The resident Lebanese community here has gone public with its concern over the situation in Lebanon, denouncing Israel over the violence. On July 18, local media carried the statement made on behalf of the Lebanese community by the Lebanese Honorary Consul, who condemned "in strongest terms" the "barbaric and unprovoked attack by Israel on the peace-loving people of Lebanon." The author characterized the "the continued destruction of infrastructure and other civilian assets in Lebanon" as "the gravest violation visited on a people since World War II." The statement concluded with an appeal for intervention by the UN Security Council and all peace-loving nations" to halt the bloodshed.

COMMENT

¶2. (C) The statement was noteworthy for its total and predictable bias against Israel, while it contained no mention of the U.S. The GOTG itself continues to maintain silence over this latest Middle East crisis. The statement notwithstanding, we stand by our previous assessment that Israeli actions in Lebanon are not/not likely to generate protest activities or other threats to U.S. interests in The Gambia. At the same time, we will continue to monitor the situation and Embassy's security posture closely and will remain in touch with Gambian authorities. END COMMENT.

STAFFORD